(b) if so, what was the precise offer and Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) In response to a suggestion made by External Affairs Minister regarding a Joint Mechanism to share intelligence about the movement of terrorists in order to put an end to cross border infiltration, some Pakistani leaders had reacted negatively and characterized it as unworkable. President Musharraf in an interview to a Pakistani newspaper was reported to have stated on May 27, 2003, *inter alia*, that Pakistan would consider the idea when a specific proposal was made, but also added that Pakistan would also need see why and what type of intelligence it could share with India.

Pakistan's continued sponsorship of cross border infiltration and terrorism, and its unwillingness to take any action against infiltrators, or the infrastructure of support to terrorism in Pakistan, does not infuse any confidence in Pakistan's sincerity to share relevant information. Contrary to facts, Pakistan continues to deny any involvement with terrorism. It has also not handed over any of the fugitives from Indian law presently in Pakistan, and about whom repeated requests have been made for apprehending and handing over to India.

US help in Field of Atomic Power Generation

3077. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any breakthrough has been achieved or is expected in negotiations with the US regarding the removal of constraints on the export from US of high tech dual use technologies for expansion of our Nuclear Energy Programme; and

(b) whether France has shown its willingness to enter into a cooperation agreement with India for peaceful uses of atomic energy *e.g.* in the field of power generation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH):(a) Government is engaged in a dialogue with the United States to develop and expand civilian nuclear cooperation, after the United States lifted, in September, 2001, the sanctions imposed on India in May, 1998. There has been progress in these areas. There is now no regulatory prohibition on supply of U.S.

'dual use' goods and technologies to India's civilian nuclear programme, although policy-related restrictions continue to remain in place. India and the United States have initiated five programmes related to nuclear safety. Exchange of visits by U.S and Indian nuclear regulatory officials has also commenced.

(b) India and France are cooperating in a number of areas related to nuclear safety. There have been discussions on cooperation in other areas of mutual interest.

Passports pendency at RPO, Hyderabad

3078. SHRI S. M. LALJAN BASHA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a vast backlog of passport applications in Hyderabad;

(b) the number of applications presently pending with the RPO, Hyderabad;

(c) whether it is a fact that passports are issued at a leisurely pace at Hyderabad;

(d) whether any inspection has been done of the general atmosphere of the office; and

(e) if so, the details of such an inspection report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH):(a) No.

(b) The number of applications pending with Passport Office, Hyderabad as on 30.7.2003 is 262.

(c) No.

(d) and (e) Passport Office, Hyderabad was inspected on 24.4.2003 by the Secretary in charge of the Central Passport Organisation.

Proposed measures for foreigners entering USA

3079. SHRI P. PRABHAKHAR REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the U.S. administration would make finger printing and photographing mandatory for all visa-carrying foreign visitors entering U.S.A. from January, 2004;